

02PT6540-01 PRISONS IN SOCIAL & HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

RTS-O

SPRING 2020

J. Nicholas Reid, D.Phil.

Class meets MONDAY mornings 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION (According to the RTS Catalogue)**

Michel Foucault in his book, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, argued that the prison was a particularly modern phenomenon. While ongoing studies have challenged his view about the origin of prisons, his work was a major contributing force to studying prisons from an historical perspective, encouraging ongoing reflection on the history and social impact of prisons. In this course, students will study the history of prisons with a view towards gaining meaningful background and theological focus to ask fundamental questions about justice in our contemporary society.

**COURSE DETAILS**

1. *Grading Schedule.* The letter grading scale for this course is institutional catalogue and is summarized below.

A (97-100) 4.00

A- (94-96) 3.66

B+ (91-93) 3.33

B (88-90) 3.00
B- (86-87) 2.66

C+ (83-85) 2.33
C (80-82) 2.00
C- (78-79) 1.66

D+ (75-77) 1.33

D (72-74) 1.00
D- (70-71) 0.66
F (below 70) 0.00

I (incomplete) –

W (withdraw) –

S (satisfactory) –

P (passing) –

2. *Attendance and Late Assignments*. **Attendance and prepared participation is required**. If class is not attended, the student’s final grade will be affected. Late assignments are reduced one letter grade per day.

3. *Special Needs*. In order to ensure full class participation, any student with a disabling condition requiring special accommodations (e.g. tape recorders, special adaptive equipment) is strongly encouraged to contact the instructor at the beginning of the course.

4. *Disclaimer*. This syllabus is intended to reflect accurately the learning objectives, instructional format and other information necessary for students to appraise the course. However, the instructor reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus as may become necessary.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Textbooks**

Michelle Alexander. *The New Jim Crowe*. NY: The New Press, 2012.

St. Basil the Great. *On Social Justice,* Popular Patristic Series. NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2009.

Michel Foucault. *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. NY: Vintage Books, 1995.

Malcolm Gladwell. “Starting Over.” *The New Yorker* (August, 2015). Can be found [here](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/08/24/starting-over-dept-of-social-studies-malcolm-gladwell).[[1]](#footnote-2)

Tayari Jones. *An American Marriage*. NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2018.

Eds., Norval Morris, David J. Rothman. *The Oxford History of the Prison.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

John Pfaff. *Locked In*. NY: Basic Books, 2017.

J. Nicholas Reid, “The Birth of the Prison: The Functions of Imprisonment in Early Mesopotamia,” *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern History* 3 (2016): 81-115. Download [here](https://www.academia.edu/35384443/The_Birth_of_the_Prison_The_Functions_of_Imprisonment_in_Early_Mesopotamia).[[2]](#footnote-3)

Robert J. Sampson and John H. Laub. “A Life-Course View of the Development of Crime.” *Annals of the American Academy* 602 (2005): 12–45.

*Selected Articles on Prisons in the Classical World to be supplied via Canvas.*

**Important Dates**

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| --- | --- |
| December 1 | Registration opens through Self-Service |
| February 4 | Orientation |
| February 5 | Classes Begin |
| February 19 | Last day to add a class |
| March 11 | Last day to drop a class |
| March 23-27 | Spring Break |
| May 12 | Last day of spring semester classes |
| May 15 | Term paper deadline (11:00 a.m.) |
| May 18-21 | Examination period |
| May 22 | Commencement |

**Assignments**

**Reading –** 20% of final grade

**Attendance and Participation –** 20% of final grade

**In Class Presentation –** Eachstudent present on their position paper –20% of Grade

**Position Paper.** Write a position paper reflecting both on the history of prisons and on the prisons in our current political context (3000-5000 words). The paper is **due April 26 by 11 am**. – 40% of final grade



**Course Objectives Related to MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: Prisons in Social & Historical Perspectives (02PT6540)

Professor: Dr. J. Nicholas Reid

Campus: RTS Orlando

Date: Spring 2020

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| **MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes** In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes. \*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus | **Rubric*** Strong
* Moderate
* Minimal
* None
 | **Mini-Justification** |
| **Articulation (oral & written)** | Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. | Strong | Academic paper stresses articulation by engaging with primary sources and secondary literature. |
| **Scripture** | Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.) | Moderate | Notions of Justice in Scripture will feature prominently. |
| **Reformed Theology** | Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards | Minimal | Limited theological discussion. |
| **Sanctification** | Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification. | Minimal | Connections made between love of God and love of neighbor |
| **Desire for Worldview** | Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. | Moderate | Desire to conform worldview to the Biblical text. |
| **Winsomely Reformed** | Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.) | Minimal | Academic integrity and warm piety expected when engaging the ideas of others.  |
| **Preach** | Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm. | Minimal | Limited implications for pulpit ministry. |
| **Worship** | Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service. | Minimal | Limited discussion of worship. |
| **Shepherd** | Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity, promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide. | Moderate | Provides insight into various pastoral issues related to our current context. |
| **Church/World** | Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues. | Strong | Provides deep historical understanding of a significant social institution. How should Christians think about prisons? |

1. Full link: <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/08/24/starting-over-dept-of-social-studies-malcolm-gladwell> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Full link: <https://www.academia.edu/35384443/The_Birth_of_the_Prison_The_Functions_of_Imprisonment_in_Early_Mesopotamia> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)